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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Scottish Education, School and University. From Early Times to 1908.*

By JOHN KERR. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons; London: Cambridge University Press, 1910. Pp. xvi+442. \$2.00.

The writer who undertakes to compress successfully into a single volume the history of Scottish education as seen through its schools and universities is confronted with a serious task. His purpose should be no less to satisfy the specific desires of educators than to furnish an account interesting enough to appeal to the general reader; the thread of his narrative must be spun over seven centuries, at the least; and he needs to have spent many years both in active service in the field of education and also in tracing his theme back to its roots in mediaeval literature.

Professor Kerr, in his *Scottish Education*, has used discrimination in the emphasis laid upon different periods of his work and in the material used to develop each period. His aim was to select from available sources details that are typical of the time and locality to which they belong and to present them in an impressionist view.

The history falls conveniently into four parts, the first being an account of schools from early times to 1560, the founding of grammar schools, and the three earliest universities, St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. The earlier universities were modeled after the mediaeval universities of the Continent; papal authority was required to give them self-government, immunity from taxation, power of conferring degrees, and liberty to teach; they were dependent on the support given them by interested church dignitaries; they were primarily ecclesiastical and secondarily educational.

The second period embraces the 136 years between 1560 and 1696. Burgh and other schools receive treatment in a separate chapter, done with interesting detail. The emoluments of masters of these schools were meager, the principal sources of income being from church lands, endowments made by private persons, fees that were apportioned to the ability of the patron, bent silver, Candlemas offerings, and cock-money. Cock-fights took place in the schoolroom, none but scholars and gentlemen and persons of note being present. The cocks that would not fight, or that got killed in the fight, became the perquisite of the teacher. Two universities had their beginning during this period, Marischal College, founded by Earl Marischal in 1593, and Edinburgh University, of disputed date, as the development of the Town's College of Edinburgh into the famous university was a gradual process. During the period university life in all five institutions was in a state of change and unrest, due principally to no less than seven alterations between Presbytery and Episcopacy.

The education act of 1872 marks the end of the third period of the history. By this act the tenure of office for teachers of burgh and parochial schools appointed after the passage of the act was "during the pleasure of the school

board." Down to the end of the seventeenth century signature to the Confession of Faith was one of the conditions of appointment. During the eighteenth century it practically ceased to be mandatory, although there are several instances of the signature as late as 1860. Among topics of particular interest may be mentioned the S. P. C. K. schools, which had their origin in 1790 by a grant to incorporate the "Society for the Propagating of Christian Knowledge in Scotland"; the distinguished part played by David Stow in connection with the training of teachers; and the list of Scotsmen, eminent in almost every branch of academic culture, who contributed to the intellectual brilliancy of the eighteenth century.

The fourth period, which occupies about one-third of the volume, is treated with greater detail and in a more interesting manner than the earlier periods. The author has had a close and practical acquaintance with the school and university life of both Scotland and England for more than fifty years; consequently this part of the history may be considered not so much the compilation of a painstaking historian as the judicious interpretation of the progress made in the educational institutions of Scotland in recent years by one who has had no small part in their development. The appendix rises above the ordinary repository for statistical and other technical matter; it consists of short treatises, by experts, on such topics as primary schools, the system of training teachers (1905), secondary schools, the present state of technical education, and the universities.

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*Handwriting.* By EDWARD L. THORNDIKE (Teachers College Record, XI, 2). New York: Columbia University Press, 1910. Pp. 93. With many charts. \$0.30.

The author describes a method of testing handwriting and reports some results of the application of the method to several school systems. The object is to find a means of grading a specimen or group of specimens of writing. For this purpose a scale is constructed, consisting of samples representing regularly ascending degrees of excellence as measured by the qualities legibility, beauty, and character. The samples which represent these different degrees are selected by a group of "competent judges" from a large number of specimens of writing. In some cases two or three samples of different styles of writing are given to represent a given grade. This scale is to serve as a standard by which to set requirements for the attainment of schools, successive grades in a school, individuals, written examinations, etc., and as a standard for the comparison of different school systems or methods of teaching.

By the application of such a scale as this and by a measurement of the average speed the writing in seven school systems was examined. As a result of this examination Mr. Thorndike concludes that six of the seven school systems using various methods do not differ materially in the quality of writing produced at any particular speed. He found enormous individual variations, and announces that the rapid writers are in general also the best. From the fact that the writing of most adults is poorer than that of many children of the upper grades, the